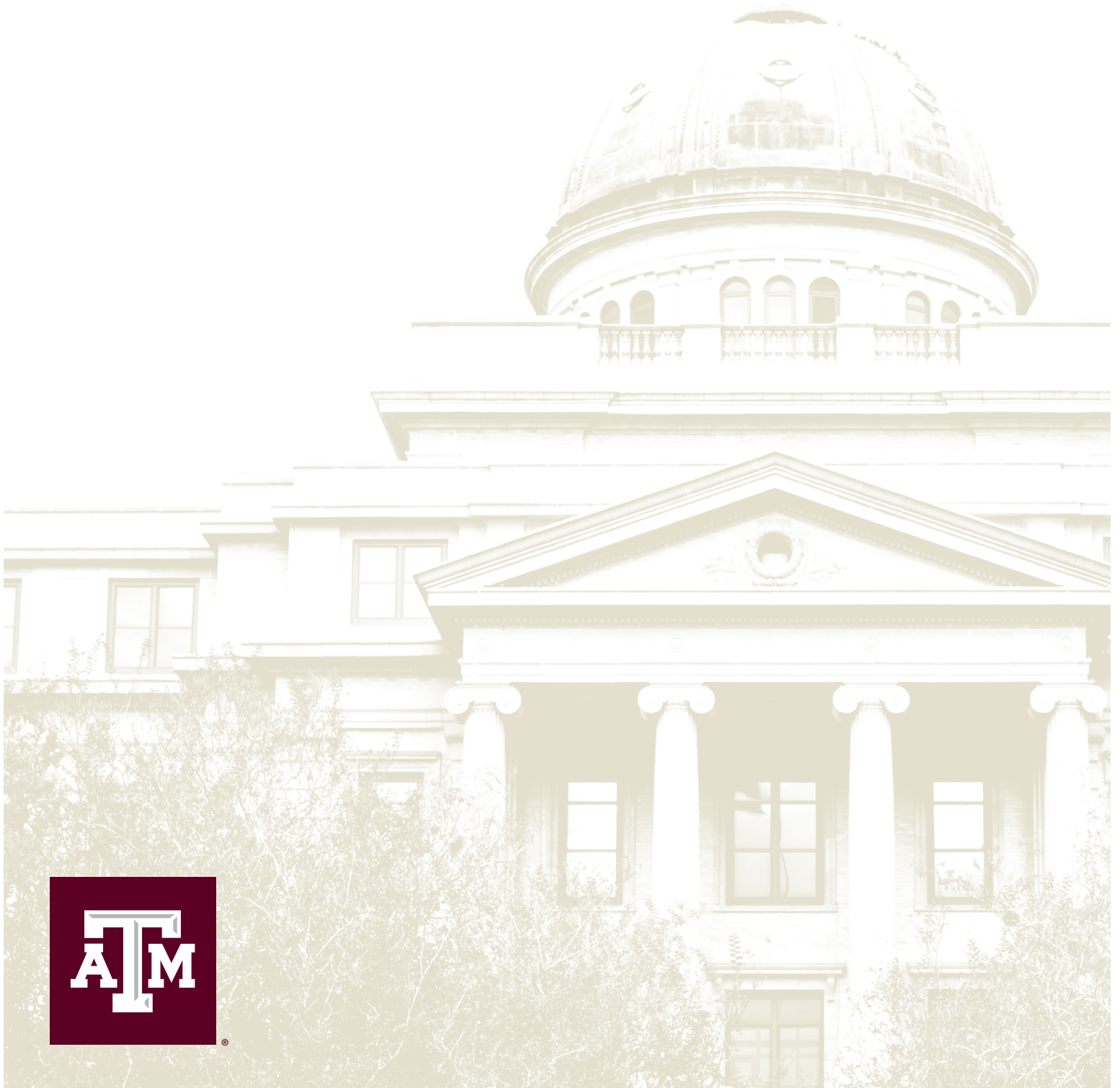


COMMUNITY OF FACULTY RETIREES

PROGRAM ARCHIVE





TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY Community of Faculty Retirees

MISSION

The Community of Faculty Retirees (CFR) is a forum established to strengthen, sustain and renew the relationship of retired faculty of Texas A&M University through events and programs of intellectual and cultural quality, involving engagement of retired faculty with each other, with colleagues still on the campus, and with the academy at large. The CFR is a community engagement of the Division of Academic and Strategic Collaborations, which provides oversight, staff and financial support.

ABOUT THE PROGRAMS

The Community of Faculty Retirees (CFR) hosts seven programs per year on or near the Texas A&M University campus. Each program has a Texas A&M faculty member as a speaker who is an expert in their field. Speakers are chosen from all disciplines across the entire University, including those experts who have continued their work into retirement. Programs begin with coffee and conversation before the presentation, and a light lunch follows the Q&A portion of the lecture.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership in the CFR is open to all faculty who have retired from Texas A&M University. The community is also open to spouses and partners whether or not they are accompanied by a faculty retiree.

PROGRAM LEADERS

In 2013, current and retired faculty led by Professor John J. McDermott, with the support of the Office of the Provost, founded the Community of Faculty Retirees. Professor McDermott, University Distinguished Professor of Philosophy and Humanities, served as its Inaugural Director until his passing. Dr. Charles R. Carlson, has served as Program Manager since the inception of the program and oversees program development, event coordination, communication with CFR members, and as liaison to the University administration.

A nine person Steering Committee of select retired and current faculty are appointed to three year terms. They develop and oversee the formulation of programs and activities designed to implement and strengthen the mission of the CFR.

CONTACT US

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facultyretirees@tamu.edu
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2013 - 2014 INAUGURAL YEAR —



SEPTEMBER 2013

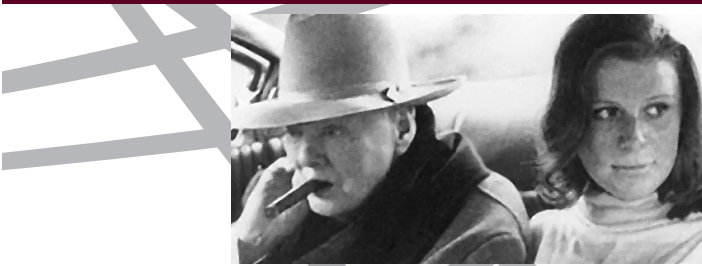
Heritage as the Key to the Future: Architecture at Texas A&M University

Presented by David Woodcock, Professor Emeritus of Architecture, and Lilia Y. Gonzales, University Architect

“The 2004 Campus Master Plan drew its inspiration from surveys of the campus community that identified a love for the spaces in the historic core of the 1876 campus and the architectural qualities of the buildings that were constructed between 1914 and 1932.

This lecture will discuss the underlying design principles of the 2004 Plan and its evolution over its ten-year life, and describe the current operational process that guides decisions on the future of the physical form campus. Recent case studies will be discussed to explain how the application of the Campus Master Plan and its design guidelines shape the design of new buildings and the restoration of older structures. It will conclude with a discussion of the challenges in rehabilitating the 1931 Williams Building, so that it can assume its earlier role as the central administration building for the university.”

“The Power of Words: The Inspiring Leadership of Winston Churchill”



featuring a lecture by

Celia Sandys

granddaughter of Sir Winston Churchill and an internationally acclaimed author, journalist, and television presenter

OCTOBER 2013

Lunch and Conversation with Celia Sandys, granddaughter of Sir Winston Churchill and one of Texas A&M Press's authors

Private lunch for CFR members followed by Sandys' public lecture “The Power of Words: The Leadership of Winston Churchill”

“Sir Winston Churchill's granddaughter, internationally acclaimed author, journalist, and PBS presenter Celia Sandys, will present a public lecture titled “The Power of Words: The Inspiring Leadership of Winston Churchill” on Friday, October 25, at 10:30 a.m. in Rudder Auditorium, followed by a private luncheon and continued discussion with the Community of Faculty Retirees in the University Club.

Faculty members and students of history, communication, and English will be particularly interested in Sandys' lecture, which will allow them to hear in Churchill's own voice the inspiring words that helped him lead England through some of its darkest hours. The lecture is presented by the Office of the Provost and the Texas A&M University Press, which recently published new Texas A&M editions of two of her books.”

DECEMBER 2013

The 50th Anniversary of Inclusion at Texas A&M University

Christine A. Stanley, Vice President & Associate Provost for Diversity

Presentation was followed by a luncheon at the residence of the Chancellor of The Texas A&M University System, hosted by Chancellor and Mrs. John Sharp

“We are pleased to announce our third event for this fall, for December 3, 2013. A Q&A with the Vice President and Associate Provost of Diversity, Dr. Christine Stanley. As you are no doubt aware, Texas A&M University has sought to enhance the accountability, climate and equity for all on campus. Throughout this Fall, the University has acknowledged the 50th Anniversary of Inclusion of women and African American students. Christine will share an update on the efforts across the university that have been ably facilitated by her office.

In acknowledgment of this Q&A and our formation as the Community of Faculty Retirees, Chancellor John Sharp has offered to host this event at the Reed House (Chancellors Residence) to include a luncheon for the Community of Faculty Retirees. The presentation will be at 10:30am and lunch will be served at noon.”

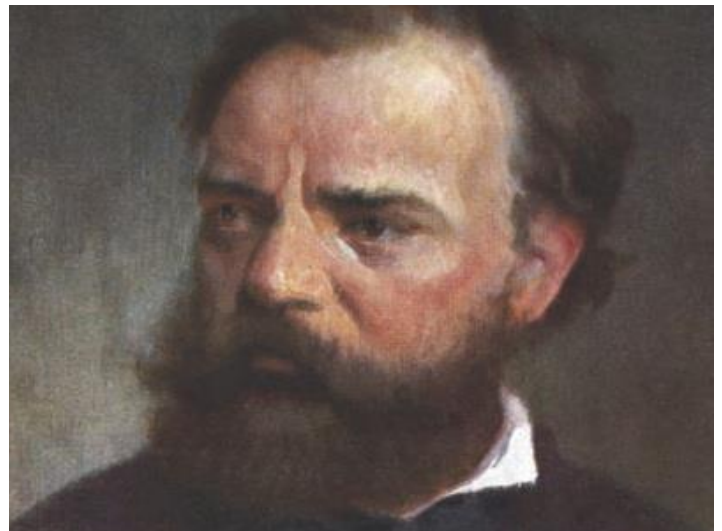


FEBRUARY 2014

How Czech is Dvorak's Musical Language?

Alan Houtchens, Professor Emeritus of Performance Studies. An analysis of Dvorak's work with musical illustrations

“Antonín Dvořák (1841-1904) was deeply attached to his familial roots, his native Czech language, the landscape of Bohemia, and the rural and urban Habsburg culture into which he was born and schooled. Although he quickly became recognized as the worthy successor to Bedřich Smetana as a spokesperson for the Czech National Revival Movement, he managed, as this lecture will demonstrate, to develop a cosmopolitan personal style of composition that transcends the trappings of chauvinistic nationalism. Dr. Houtchens will incorporate the music of Dvořák into his discussion.”





APRIL 2014

Borlaug Institute Engagement: Rwandan Hope from Travesty

Elsa A. Murano, Interim Director of The Borlaug Institute

*A review of programs and initiatives of Texas A&M
faculty in Rwanda*

“In 1994, Lt. General Dallaire was appointed Force Commander for the United Nations Assistance Mission in Rwanda (UNAMIR), where he witnessed the country descend into chaos and genocide, leading to the deaths of more than 800,000 Rwandans. Lt. Gen Dallaire, along with a small contingent of Ghanaian soldiers and military observers, disobeyed the command to withdraw and remained in Rwanda to fulfill their ethical obligation to protect those who sought refuge with the UN forces.”



MAY 2014

2nd Annual Community of Faculty Retirees Forum

*Featuring a Q&A with Dr. Karan Watson, Provost and
Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs*

*Presentation by University Distinguished Professor
Emeritus of Chemistry John Fackler entitled:
“Understanding Gold: Why Gold, Even in Aggie Rings,
Deteriorates with Time”*

“In the 1970s, a few years before arriving at Texas A&M as Dean of the College of Science, Dr. John Fackler questioned the observation made in Germany by a distinguished chemist who claimed to have synthesized a material that contained a gold-gold bond but with the element in an unusual oxidation state. As a result of this curiosity, or more appropriately skepticism, he embarked on 40 years of research on the element. In his lecture he intends to describe the development of our understanding of gold from before alchemists to the physicist Isaac Newton. He will also address contemporary uses for gold as well as explore notions of its value.”

2014 SUMMER CONVERSATION SERIES:

JUNE 2014

Early Years: Women Faculty on Campus

*Clarissa T. Kimber, Professor Emerita of Geography;
Jane Magill, Retired Professor of Plant Pathobiology &
Microbiology; Mary Ann O'Farrell, Associate Professor of
English*

"The program will feature a conversation about the experiences of women faculty during the decades of change from 1960-79. A major figure during the first decade was General Earl Rudder, who was President of the college. He was asked by the Governor to lead the College into a University. Among the changes he initiated was the making of nine colleges out of the three original, the making of the Corp of Cadets voluntary, and the addition of women to the student body. There was strong opposition to each of these items from the former students, the student body, and the administrations. Nevertheless General Rudder prevailed. The conversation will be developed by three former members of the teaching and research faculty and by one who is still an active faculty member. They are Barbara O'Brien, Jane Magill, Sara Bednarz, and Clarissa T. Kimber. After a short introduction by Dr. Kimber about diversity and the cultural change, the four will speak of their experiences in the order of their hiring by the University. The anecdotal remarks will be centered around, but not limited to, four topics.

1. Their own hiring processes.
2. Interactions of the first new women faculty hired at A&M with those outside the University. This includes towns' people, salesmen on campus, College Station police, etc.
3. Interactions with other faculty, staff, and students.
4. Modification of facilities to accommodate women.

These remarks will be limited to about five minutes each, at which point the conversation will be opened to the other participants in the room and further talk is expected."



2014 - 2015 SERIES



SEPTEMBER 2014

Accelerated Sea-Level Rise and the Future of the Texas Coast

John Anderson, the Maurice Ewing Professor of Oceanography at Rice University

“The rate of rise has increased six fold in historical time and to date the only plausible explanation for this unprecedented change is global warming and associated heating and expansion of oceans. The consensus of the scientific community is that the current rate rise will at least double by the end of this century, dramatically impacting coastal regions. But predicting the response of the coasts to accelerated sea-level rise is complicated. Our approach is to study the evolution of the Texas coast and bays at times when the rate of sea-level rise was at or near that predicted for this century and to develop better numerical models for predicting response of barrier islands to accelerated sea level rise. The results indicate radical changes in coastal evolution in the past. Several episodes of rapid flooding of bays appear to have been synchronous across the northern Gulf of Mexico and may have been caused by contributions from ice sheets. The results of this analysis indicates that in coming decades the coast will experience more dramatic change than is occurring today. Texas bays will be most severely impacted. Diminished sediment supply and human intervention will only exacerbate the problem.”



OCTOBER 2014

“Kennewick Man”

Douglas W. Owsley, Division Head for Physical Anthropology at the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of Natural History | Special presentation of “Texas History, Written in Bone”

“Douglas W. Owsley, Ph.D., division head for physical anthropology at the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of Natural History in Washington, D.C., will present a lecture titled “Kennewick Man: The Scientific Investigation of an Ancient American Skeleton” on Thursday, October 16, 2014, at 10:30 a.m., in the Rudder Theatre Complex, followed by a private luncheon and continued discussion with the Community of Faculty Retirees in the University Club. Both programs will be held in conjunction with the release of a book by the same title edited by Dr. Owsley and Richard L. Jantz and published by Texas A&M Press as part of the Peopling of the Americas Publications, sponsored by the Center for the Study of the First Americans.

Almost from the day of its accidental discovery along the banks of the Columbia River in Washington state in July 1996, the ancient skeleton of Kennewick Man has garnered significant attention from scientific and Native American communities as well as public media outlets. This lecture will present the results of the scientific study of this remarkable find. Faculty members and students in physical and forensic anthropology, archaeology, geology, geochemistry, and the biosciences, as well as those interested in comprehensive data collection and preservation and applications of technology will enjoy hearing Kennewick Man's story.”

NOVEMBER 2014

Spoon River Anthology: A Reading

Introduction by Jerome Loving, editor of Penguin Classics edition of Spoon River Anthology Readings of select poems by John J. McDermott, Mary Ann O'Farrell, Paul Parrish, Linda Parrish

“Join us for a reading of selected poems from Masters’s collection, written in the voices of Spoon River’s dead. Despite their location “on the hill,” Spoon River’s citizens reflect on life in witty and touching remarks, written with humor and sadness, resentment and pathos, pleasure and crankiness. Together they create a picture of what it means to live in community, with others.”



DECEMBER 2014

Perils and Possibilities of the Upcoming Legislative Session

Presented by Chancellor John Sharp; Michael Quinn, Vice President for Government Relations; and Tommy Williams, Vice Chancellor for Federal and State Relations. The presentation was followed by a luncheon at the Reed House hosted by the Chancellor and Mrs. John Sharp

“We are pleased to announce our final event for this Fall. On December 18th, Chancellor John Sharp has once again offered to host a holiday luncheon at the Reed House (Chancellor’s Residence). The presentation will be at 10:30am with lunch served at noon.

The presentation this year will feature a tentative diagnosis of the perils and possibilities of the upcoming legislative session by Chancellor Sharp, and the governmental relations team of Michael O’Quinn, Vice President for Government Relations, and Tommy Williams, Vice Chancellor for Federal & State Relations. A brief, friendly, question and answer period will follow.”





FEBRUARY 2015

Tuberculosis: Why does this ancient disease remain a global health threat in the 21st century?

Presented by David N. McMurray, Regents Professor, Department of Microbial Pathogenesis and Immunology

“Mycobacterium tuberculosis, the causative agent of tuberculosis (TB), likely has co-evolved with its human host for more than 500,000 years. A major source of human suffering for millennia, this pathogen continues to cause misery world-wide in spite intensive efforts to eliminate it. TB is transmitted easily by aerosol and is difficult to diagnose and treat. Multidrug-resistant (MDR) strains and the diabolical synergism with HIV make TB control even more challenging in the modern era. TB thrives during economic instability, political upheaval, and armed conflict, and travels easily between countries. In the US, TB is associated with poverty and is prevalent in marginalized segments of society, including ethnic minorities. The World Health Organization target to eliminate TB by the year 2050 will not be reached with the tools currently available. Fortunately, a major research effort over the past 30 years has produced a pipeline of new diagnostic tests, therapeutic drugs, and vaccines which are currently in human trials. Nonetheless, the history of this ancient disease tells us that ultimate control of TB may be impossible until the conditions of human existence in which it thrives are improved.”



MARCH 2015

The Ultimate Fate of the Universe

Presented by Nick Suntzeff, Mitchell/Munnerlyn/Heep Professor of Observational Astronomy Lecture followed with a guided tour of the new Astronomy facility.

“On Monday, April 13th 2015 Nicholas Suntzeff the Mitchell/Munnerlyn/Heep Professor of Observational Astronomy will present a lecture entitled “The Ultimate Fate of the Universe”. Professor Suntzeff will provide information about some of the latest findings in astrophysics regarding the size, trajectory, and lifespan of the universe, as well as discuss some ‘big questions’ that will inform astrophysicists and their work in the coming years. The lecture takes place in the Stephen E. Hawking Auditorium in the George P. and Cynthia Woods Mitchell Institute for Fundamental Physics and Astronomy. A guided tour of the new physics facility will follow the lecture.”

MAY 2015

**“Moriah Revisited:
Rembrandt on Abraham”
3rd Annual Forum**

*Presented by Daniel Conway, Professor of Philosophy
and Humanities and Affiliate Professor of Religious
Studies*

“My aim in this lecture is to explore Rembrandt’s depiction of Abraham and Isaac in his 1635 canvas, popularly known as “The Sacrifice of Isaac.” In particular, I am concerned to investigate Rembrandt’s apparent decision to alter the story of the Akedah at the decisive point at which Abraham responds to the salutation offered by the angel of the Lord (Gen. 22:11). In his treatment of the Akedah, that is, Rembrandt effectively silences Abraham and elides his famous response to the angel: “Here I am” (Gen. 22:11). Rembrandt’s 1655 etching, also known as “The Sacrifice of Isaac,” offers a very different interpretation of the story of the Akedah. Here, or so I wish to claim, Rembrandt is concerned to account for Abraham’s response to the angel. He does so, I suggest, by attempting to depict Abraham as responsive to the angel’s command and, so, as attentive to his ethical obligation to Isaac. Drawing on the interpretation of the Akedah advanced by the philosopher Emmanuel Levinas, I conclude by proposing that Rembrandt’s 1655 etching may be understood to depict the moral awakening of Abraham on Mt. Moriah.”





2015 SUMMER CONVERSATION SERIES:

JULY 2015

The Early Days: Hispanic and African American Campus Experience

“The program will feature stories and unique perspectives on university life on and off campus. This is the second in a series on the changes that began in the 1960’s under President Earl Rudder. Regent Bill Mahomes will serve as the chair for the program. Mahomes was the first African American student at Texas A&M to spend all four years in the Corps of Cadets, and currently serves as a Regent for the Texas A&M University System. He will be joined on the panel by four faculty members with knowledge of the University in the early days and experience of the changes that it has undergone since. Each of the speakers will make brief remarks and then an open conversation with the audience will begin. Coffee will be served throughout the morning, with a light luncheon to follow the program.

Panelists

Chair

William ‘Bill’ Mahomes
Texas A&M University Regent

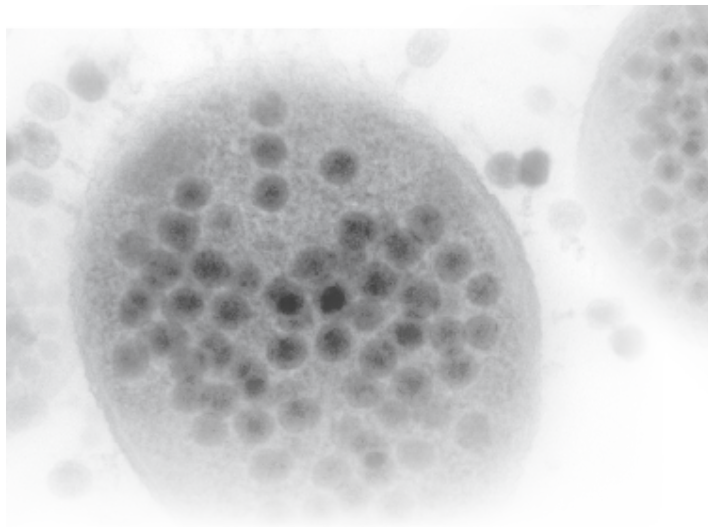
Dr. Albert Broussard
Professor of History

Dr. Carlos Gonzalez
Professor of Genetics

Dr. Valerie Taylor
Professor of Computer Science

Dr. Patricia Pietrantonio
Professor of Entomology”

2015 - 2016 SERIES



SEPTEMBER 2015

Phage Therapy Redux: The Enemy of our Enemy is our Friend

Presented by Ry Young, Professor, Department of Biochemistry and Biophysics and the Department of Biology, Director of Center for Phage Technology

“In this presentation, I will focus on the history and future of bacteriophage biology. Bacteriophages (“phage”), the viruses of bacteria, were discovered a century ago by Felix d’Herelle at the Pasteur Institute and, for a time, were considered the “magic bullet” against bacterial disease. This was based on the exponential nature of the phage infection cycle: a single particle adsorbs specifically to the surface of a bacterial cell, injects its DNA, takes over the host cell machinery, and ultimately causes the cell to explode (“lysis”), releasing hundreds of new progeny virus particles, each of which can then repeat the infection cycle. Thus a single phage added to a culture of a billion bacteria can cause destruction of all the bacteria in a couple of hours. We will consider how the premature nature of this discovery, celebrated in Sinclair Lewis’s Nobel Prize winning novel “Arrowsmith”, combined with the politics of the 1930-40s, d’Herelle’s ability to cultivate enemies, and the onset of the antibiotic era, ultimately led to the demise of phage-based therapies before mid-century. I will suggest that this new ‘Age of Phage’ will take advantage of the incredibly detailed molecular knowledge of phage biology won during the decades of model system study to engineer powerful and specific new antibacterial agents, as well as components of “nano-machines” for manipulation of our microbiome and other applications.”



NOVEMBER 2015

Pictures into Words: Why Moby-Dick is the Great Global Novel

Presented by Dennis Berthold, Professor Emeritus, Department of English

“Moby-Dick is often considered ‘the great American novel’ even though few people read it during Melville’s lifetime and many serious students of American culture (such as Woody Allen) keep promising themselves to read it—someday. Yet, the novel is widely known not only in the United States but across the globe, with translations into over 50 languages, hundreds of adaptations, thousands of editions, and countless references in popular culture. What gives such international renown to a novel that was disdained by its first readers and is so often unread today? My view is that the book’s vivid pictorialism, its striking and creative rendering of pictures into words, is a key element in its rise to pre-eminence and its increasing visibility in our contemporary media-driven and complexly visual culture. It has inspired filmmakers, sculptors, painters, and dramatists, and in 2010 it debuted at the Dallas Opera in a pathbreaking production. Recognizing the pictorial elements in the novel not only helps us understand why Moby-Dick endures, but also how to read it with greater enjoyment and understanding.”



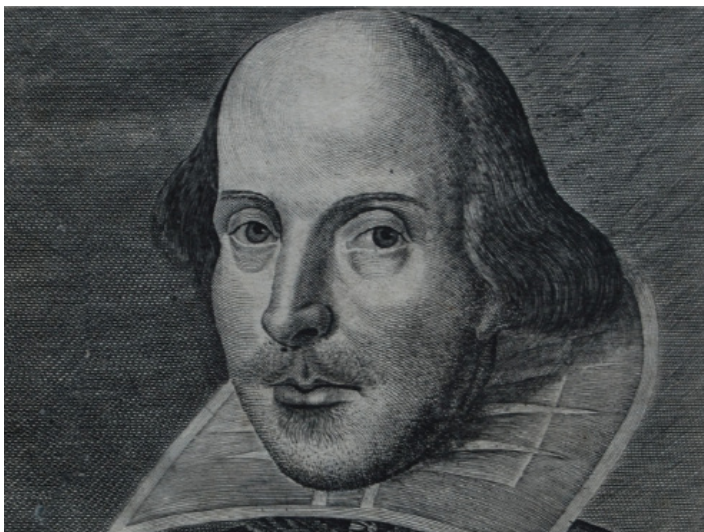
DECEMBER 2015

Public Policy Chancellor's Luncheon

A presentation and Q&A with Michael Young, Texas A&M University President. This annual event is hosted by Chancellor and Mrs. John Sharp at the Reed House

“We are pleased to announce our final event for this Fall. On Tuesday, December 15th, Chancellor John Sharp and Charlotte Sharp have once again offered to host a holiday luncheon at the Reed House (Chancellor's Residence).

The event will begin at 10:30am with a meal served at noon. The presentation this year will feature remarks by Michael Young, President of Texas A&M University. A brief, friendly, question and answer period will follow. To accommodate guests, parking will be at George H.W. Bush Presidential Library & Museum with chartered buses to and from the Chancellor's Residence.”



MARCH 2016

Becoming the Bard: Shakespeare's Popularity Then and Now

Laura Estill, Assistant Professor, Department of English, and editor of the World Shakespeare Bibliography presented a lecture followed by guided tours of the "First Folio" exhibit in the J. Wayne Stark Galleries

“Ben Jonson famously wrote, ‘Shakespeare was not of an age, but for all time’—words he might have regretted if he could know that now, centuries later, Shakespeare's name recognition had far eclipsed his own. During his life, however, Shakespeare's reputation was not that of a literary genius. In this talk, I trace the many reasons Shakespeare gained popularity after his death and became, arguably, the center of the English literary canon. We will first consider the evidence we have of Shakespeare's reception in his own day, from contemporary accounts of him and his work to the performance and publication of his plays. We will then turn to the changing status of drama as literature, the publication of the first folio, and the Romantic ideals of creative inspiration that ultimately led to Shakespeare's cultural capital today.”

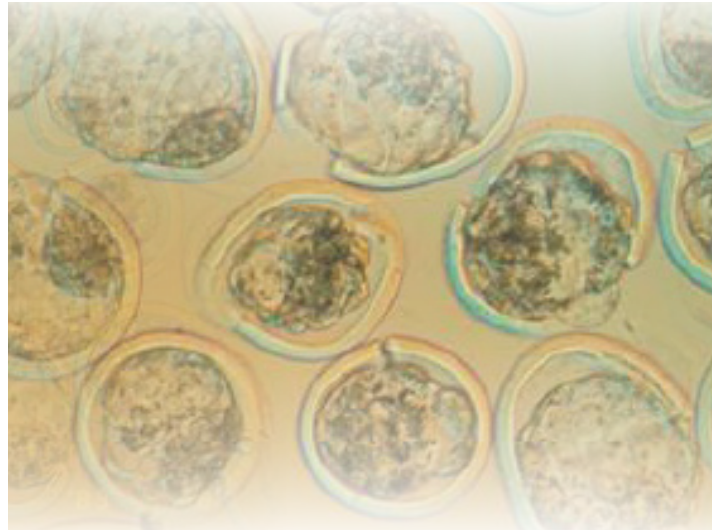
APRIL 2016

Cloning Animals: How, Why, and Why Not?

*Presented by Dewey Kraemer, Senior Professor,
Department of Veterinary Physiology and Pharmacology*

“Cloning is the production of genetically identical offspring. It occurs naturally in the form of genetically identical twins, and in the case of the nine-banded armadillo, four identical offspring. This presentation will deal mainly with the process of nucleus transfer, which was made famous by the production of Dolly the sheep in Scotland - the first clone produced by using nuclei from somatic (non-embryo) cells. This presentation will illustrate the various steps in the nucleus transfer process, including preparation of the donor (animal to be cloned) cells, enucleation of the recipient ova, transfer of the donor nucleus, activation of the resulting embryo, and transfer to the recipient mother.

It will also describe the strengths and weaknesses of this technology with emphasis placed on the fact that although genetically identical, developmentally uniqueness occurs.”



MAY 2016

4th Annual Forum

*Remarks from Provost Karan Watson;
Tim McLaughlin, Head of the Department of
Visualization, presented “Creativity and the On-Demand
Generation”*

“With the onset of ubiquitous computing – mobile devices and widespread connectivity – today’s youth have become voracious consumers of information and experiences mediated through technology. Any song desired, a book only just remembered, a favorite clip from a movie, even custom-fit clothing or medical prosthetics are all available within a few clicks of an interface. That’s why I call today’s youth the “On-Demand Generation.” They have access to experiences, information, and objects in moments. My goal as an educator is to flip this relationship. I want students to see themselves as creators of works that others can consume at the click of a button. The same technology that provides computing at our fingertips has also led to a Creativity Revolution defined by access to tools for making and access to audiences for individuals that just a few years ago only existed for corporations and the ordained cognoscenti. I want to give encouragement to the On-Demand Generation to avoid acting as passive consumers. I encourage them instead to seize the opportunity of today’s ubiquitous computing environment to engage in self-determined creative expression leading to thinking and acting like artists, authors, craftsmen, engineers, and scientists.”





2016 SUMMER CONVERSATION SERIES:

JULY 2016

LGBT Faculty at Texas A&M University: Historical Perspectives

“The third installment of the Summer Conversation Series will feature stories and unique perspectives on university life and experiences of LGBT faculty. The first two conversations were devoted to struggles undergone by the first women faculty and by the first African American and Hispanic Faculty. In each of these areas of recruitment the situation was less friendly than it should have been and in some instances hostile. Unless we understand the difficulties undergone by these three groups of faculty we tend to forget how important it is to continue the process of amelioration so as to create a climate of total inclusivity. It is unquestionable that considerable growth has taken place with regard to these matters, but it is also unquestionable that there is still much more to be accomplished. The spirit of these conversations includes the acknowledgement of the atmosphere of hope that is emerging at present, such that healing is taking place, accompanied with a resolution to be constantly alert to the necessity of inclusivity. Should you in the audience have stories to tell, please feel free to share them with us on July 28th. We look forward to your attending this very important Summer Conversation Series.

Panelists:

Harriette Andreadis

Professor of English, Emeritus

Karan Watson

Regents Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering

Larry Hickman

Professor of Philosophy, Emeritus”

2016 - 2017 SERIES

OCTOBER 2016

"Parrots, Pigeons and Penguins: Avian Research at Texas A&M"

Presented by Ian Tizard, University Distinguished Professor of Immunology and the Richard Schubot Chair in Exotic Bird Health. Presentation followed by guided tour of new Schubot Exotic Bird Health Center.

"The Schubot Exotic Bird Health Center is tasked with conducting research and supporting the clinical program in exotic bird health. The program has diverse activities, some very basic and many applied. Most of our studies focus on the health and conservation of parrots. We are especially engaged in infectious disease research, genetics, nutrition, conservation and behavior. We have a very active research program based at Tambopata in the Amazon Rain Forest of Eastern Peru. Dr Tizard will review the highlights of these programs. We have recently joined the Passenger Pigeon deextinction project and are looking forward to breeding the birds to be used in this project. About a year ago, the College of Veterinary Medicine completed a state-of-the-art aviary. Participants will be given a tour of the complex where we house large numbers of parrots, as well as a demonstration of parrot behavioral studies currently underway."



NOVEMBER 2016

"Ferocity as Government: The Great Royal Despot at Ur Mesopotamia"

Presented by Bruce Dickson, Emeritus Professor of Anthropology

"Any roster of the world's most significant archeological sites invariably includes the 16 'Royal Tombs' and 'Royal Death Pits' dating to c. 2500 BC that were found at the ancient Sumerian city of Ur, on the Euphrates River in Mesopotamia. Perhaps the chief reason for interest is the large number of human sacrifices that accompanied the interments. Sir Leonard Woolley, their excavator and a prolific and talented prose stylist held the view that the royal graves contained the remains of 'sacred or divine kings'. His work led to the conclusion that the royal graves contained people who went willingly to their deaths out of loyalty, devotion and faith in their monarch. Of course, this interpretation may be correct. I argue, however, that we could with equal justification conclude that Ur's leaders were weak and vulnerable and their practice of ritual sacrifice was meant to terrorize a restive citizenry and to convince themselves and others of their right to rule. Kingdoms with "sacred or divine kings" often had deep structural weaknesses that required constant affirmation of their divinity with the practice of theatrical rites of public mystification, including acts of cruelty, to buttress their hold on power. Consequently, the royal graves may contain the remains of carefully staged and choreographed political dramas that portray only the official or 'public transcript' of the rulers of that city-state."





DECEMBER 2016

Chancellor's Annual Holiday Luncheon

Featuring remarks by Andrew P. Morriss, Dean of Texas A&M University School of Law.

Event sponsored by Chancellor John Sharp and held at the Reed House. Presented by Bruce Dickson, Emeritus Professor of Anthropology

“We are pleased to announce our final event for the Fall semester. On December 12th, Chancellor John Sharp and Charlotte Sharp have once again offered to host a holiday luncheon at the Reed House (Chancellor's Residence). The event will begin at 10:30am with a meal served at noon. The presentation this year will feature remarks by Andrew P. Morriss, Dean of the Texas A&M University School of Law and Anthony G. Buzbee Endowed Chair. A brief, friendly, question and answer period will follow. Parking for guests will be at the George Bush Memorial Library with bus transportation to the Reed House.”



MARCH 2017

“Dolphin Communication: There is Much Going On”

Presented by Bernd Würsig, University Distinguished Professor of Marine Biology and George P. Mitchell, Chair of Sustainable Fisheries, Texas A&M University Galveston

“There are close to 40 species of dolphins, from 7 to 10-m long killer whales, or orcas, to small 1 to 2-m size riverine and coastal forms. All are highly social and vocal, but there are strong differences in behavioral flexibilities (or “intelligences”) among the taxonomic family delphinidae, perhaps not unlike herding and small group ungulates on land. Würsig will speak mainly about a little southern hemisphere species, the dusky dolphin, with which he and wife Melany have spent much time since the early 1970's. Dusky dolphins live in gregarious fission-fusion societies, with cultural aspects of feeding in one manner in summer, and in a different manner in different habitat in winter, adjusting their day/night behaviors and society structures according to feeding, social, and predator avoidance needs. They communicate largely by sight and sound, and we are just beginning to make reasonable in-roads to how they coordinate their social lives.”

APRIL 2017

“The Acropolis of Athens: The Architectural Construction of Memory”

Presented by Nancy Klein, Department of Architecture

“Today, our view of the Acropolis is focused on the magnificent temple of Athena Parthenos, rebuilt after the Persian wars under the leadership of the Athenian statesman Pericles in the second half of the 5th century BC. But this vision is a deliberately constructed view of the past, and one that eclipses thousands of years of human activity before and after the Parthenon. In the 1830s, the fledgling country of Greece sought to establish a national identity that reflected its classical heritage, and the Acropolis of Athens became a symbol of the birthplace of democracy and the humanistic arts. Efforts were undertaken to free the classical monuments from the overburden of later history, including the removal of many post-classical buildings and excavation to bedrock. An unexpected result was the discovery of thousands of fragments of architecture, sculpture, pottery, and small finds that hinted at older and poorly known periods of human activity on the Acropolis. For an archaeologist who studies the history of architecture, these broken and battered architectural blocks represent a tantalizing challenge to explore a formative phase of classical architecture for which we have no guidebook. With permission from the Hellenic Ministry of Culture and Sport, I am using this material to reconstruct a picture of the architectural development sanctuary on the Acropolis before the Parthenon. My research reveals that the early buildings introduced forms echoed in the classical period. It also identifies evidence for programmatic reuse and recycling of architectural elements that demonstrate the rebuilding of the Acropolis in the 5th century BC was, itself, an expression of constructed memory.”



MAY 2017

5th Annual May Forum “Middle East Meltdown: Causes and Consequences”

Presented by Ambassador Ryan Crocker, Executive Professor at the George Bush School of Government and Public Policy. Also featured remarks from Provost Karan Watson on her time as Provost

“The modern Middle East emerged from WWI and the defeat of the Ottoman Empire a century ago. The British and the French literally drew the lines on the map. Always turbulent, the region has never seen chaos on today’s scale. Coups and revolutions have always been part of the landscape, but we are now witnessing total state failure. How did we get to this point, what are the characteristics of the current situation and what should the U.S. do about it? Where appropriate, Ambassador Ryan Crocker will illustrate certain points with his experiences during almost 40 years in the area.”





JULY 2017

Spoon River Anthology: A Reading

Introduction by Jerome Loving, editor of Penguin Classics edition of Spoon River Anthology Readings of select poems by John J. McDermott, Mary Ann O'Farrell, David Woodcock, Valerie Woodcock, Jerry Loving, and Cathy Loving

“Join us for a reading of selected poems from Masters’s collection, written in the voices of Spoon River’s dead. Despite their location “on the hill,” Spoon River’s citizens reflect on life in witty and touching remarks, written with humor and sadness, resentment and pathos, pleasure and crankiness. Together they create a picture of what it means to live in community, with others.”

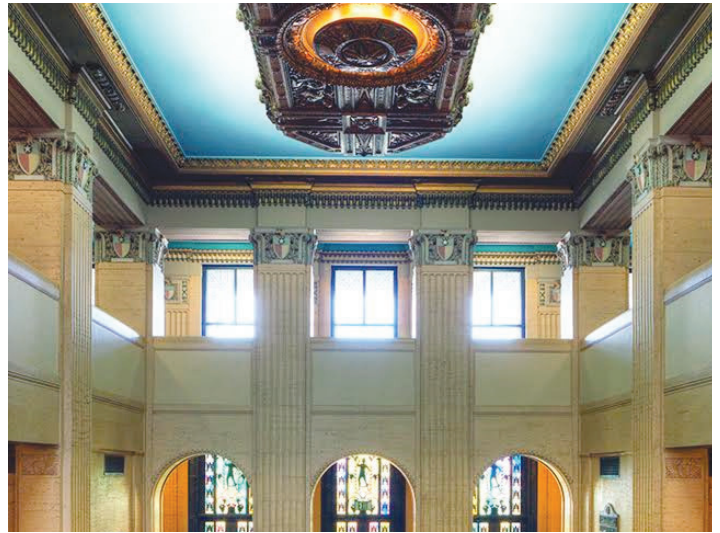
2017 - 2018 SERIES

SEPTEMBER 2017

"Architecture that Speaks: S.C.P. Vosper and Ten Remarkable Buildings at Texas A&M"

Presented by David G. Woodcock, Professor Emeritus of Architecture, Nancy T. McCoy, FAIA, FAPT, and Carolyn Brown

"Frederick Ernst Giesecke, an 1886 engineering graduate, returned to campus in 1927 to serve as head of the architecture program, head of engineering research, and College Architect. He arrived at the confluence of five critical influences: the impact of the 1923 Santa Rita oil discovery on the Permanent University Fund; the Great Depression and the availability of cheap, but highly skilled, labor; the construction of Highway 6 on the eastern boundary of the campus; the need for new buildings to house increasingly sophisticated approaches to agricultural and engineering education; and the opportunity to hire a brilliant, if difficult, architect, Samuel Charles Phelps Vosper. Vosper, a New Yorker trained in the Beaux-Arts tradition, would in four short years, design ten buildings that are arguably the best on the campus, and that continue to "speak" about the nature and aspirations of the institution that commissioned them, and that reflect the values and missions of the disciplines housed in them."



NOVEMBER 2017

"Science in the Sierra Madre: Insights on Evolution, Experiences in Mexico"

Presented by Gil Rosenthal, Professor of Biology and of Ecology & Evolutionary Biology

"The origin of species remains the central problem of evolutionary biology. This is a complex problem to unravel, in part because speciation and hybridization depend critically on individual mating decisions. The mechanisms underlying these decisions are subject to functional constraints and responsive to environmental and social influences. Our work uses behavioral, environmental, and genomic approaches to understand the dynamics of reproductive isolation and hybridization between sister species of livebearing fish, *Xiphophorus birchmanni* and *X. malinche*. Extensive behavioral studies by our group have shown that conspecific mate preferences in these species depend on divergent, experience-dependent female responses to male pheromone signals. Conspecific mate preferences are so fragile that they fail when the physical or social environment is disrupted. The increase in human disturbance of their natural habitat within the last few decades may explain rampant recent hybridization between these species. Genomic analysis by our group suggest that punctuated episodes of interspecific genetic exchange are a defining feature of *Xiphophorus* evolution. Ongoing work centers on a long-term study of how environmental gradients and mating preferences interact to shape hybrid phenotypes and patterns of gene flow across lineages. The presentation will focus on this work on *birchmanni*-*malinche* hybrids as well as highlight some of the Rosenthal Lab's outreach and education activities in Mexico."



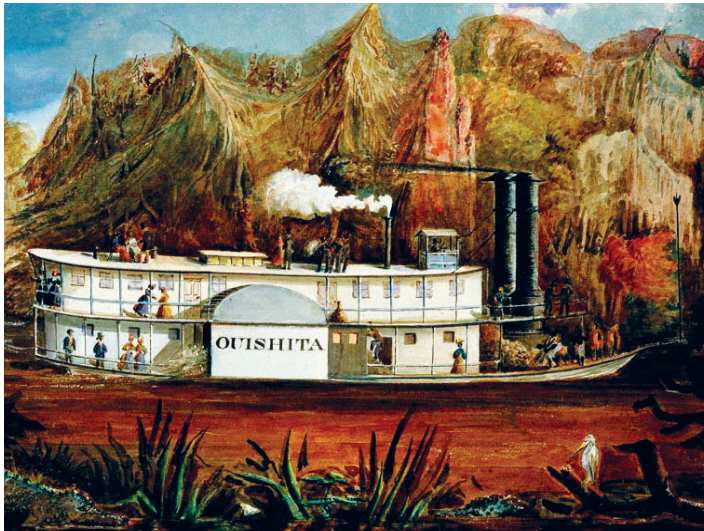


DECEMBER 2017

Chancellor's Annual Holiday Luncheon

Remarks by Charles Schwartz, Chairman of the Board of Regents, Texas A&M University System

"We are pleased to announce our final event for the Fall semester. On December 4th, Chancellor John Sharp and Charlotte Sharp have once again offered to host a holiday luncheon. The presentation this year will feature remarks by Charles W. Schwartz, Chairmen of the Board of Regents for the Texas A&M University System. A brief, friendly, question and answer period will follow. The program will also include a reading of the Dylan Thomas poem 'A Child's Christmas in Wales' by David Woodcock, Emeritus Professor of Architecture. The Chancellor's Suite will be open at 10am for coffee and conversation and the program will begin at 10:30am."



FEBRUARY 2018

"Lessons from the *Heroine*: The Early Years of Mississippi Steamboat Navigation"

Presented by Kevin Crisman, professor and Insitute of Nautical Archaeology Faculty Fellow, College of Liberal Arts, Texas A&M

"The steamboat looms large as a symbol of 19th century North America, of the era's inventive genius, of the westward advance of the United States, and of an exuberant, chaotic frontier culture that defines us to this day. For all its influence, the age of steamboats on the Mississippi was incredibly brief: the first steamer entered service in 1811, the fleet numbered in the hundreds by mid-century, then it swiftly shrank to insignificance by the final quarter of the century. The steamboats of the western rivers were ephemeral creations: lightly constructed to navigate in shallow water, they rarely stayed afloat for more than five years. Their boilers and engines were assembled by craftsmen in a manner that owed more to art than to engineering.

The documentary record has left us with few plans, specifications, or 'insider' accounts of steamboat crewmembers (Mark Twain's *Life on the Mississippi* is a rare exception). In short, for all of their historical importance, we know remarkably little about western steamboat assembly and operations, particularly for those built prior to 1850.

Our knowledge of these craft received a significant boost with the discovery and excavation of the well-preserved sidewheel steamboat *Heroine*. Built in 1832, and snagged and sunk in 1838 in the Red River between the 'Indian Territory' and the Republic of Texas, this vessel is yielding a wealth of insights into the life, times, and fast-evolving technology of the earliest steamboats."

APRIL 2018

“A Chamber of Secrets: Endocrine Control in Fire Ants to Dominate, Eat, and Reproduce”

Presented by Dr. Patricia Pietrantonio, Assistant Professor, Texas A&M University, Insect Physiologist and Toxicologist

“Dr. Pietrantonio’s presentation will summarize research that in the last few years was supported with a National Science Foundation Integrative Organismal System award. The presentation will introduce fire ant biology and present our current understanding of key hormones and receptors controlling reproductive maturation of queens, feeding, and colony growth. Insecticide applications have not been fully successful in controlling fire ants, in part because colonies of this social insect operate as a superorganism. Basic knowledge on endocrinology, behavior, and chemical ecology is needed to manage this pest. The presentation will include images and videos that help elucidate these issues in a way that appeals to both biologists and those who have a more general interest in why these intriguing organisms continue to thrive and spread.”



MAY 2018

“Humor and Characterization in Piano Music”

Presented by Werner Rose, Retired Professor, Texas A&M University, assisted in the initial development of an academic Music Program in the College of Liberal Arts

“Music composed to be performed on keyboard instruments has challenged composers for over three centuries. How does one convey meaning through this medium without verbal, visual, or physical display? How can piano music convey an emotion(s), mirror a character(s), or embellish and enhance a known story?

This short performance program will examine the genius with which composers have wrestled with these dilemmas and how the results so clearly represent their personal musical styles, as well, including:

- The wit of Joseph Haydn and Ludwig von Beethoven as they offer surprises within musical structures.
- How the mysterious “nighttime” is conveyed by Frederic Chopin and Bela Bartok.
- Franz Liszt’s dramatic inspiration based on a scene from Lenau’s Faust.
- Claude Debussy’s embrace of the “Minstrel” tradition and its satirical opportunities.
- Louis Moreau Gottschalk’s import of Lisztian flamboyance to the music of America.”



2018 - 2019 SERIES



OCTOBER 2018

“Role of Robotics in Support of Human Spaceflight Missions”

Presented by Nancy Currie-Gregg, Professor of Engineering Practice at Texas A&M University, a NASA astronaut, a retired United States Army colonel and master Army aviator, and a member of the Women in Aviation International Hall of Fame

“Future endeavors in space will provide a number of operational challenges including in-situ construction of large structures, long system operational life in harsh environments requiring maintenance and servicing, minimal ground based support with long periods of latency, and complex operations protocols. Future space missions will depend on integration of humans, intelligent robots, and other autonomous systems into cohesive teams that are both adaptable and efficient to respond to these challenges.

The presentation will also include discussion of Currie-Gregg’s role in operating the Space Shuttle robotic arm on several missions including building the ISS and servicing the Hubble Space Telescope.”



NOVEMBER 2018

“Only a Matter of Time: Mega-Quakes & Tsunamis in Cascadia”

Presented by Richard Carlson, Regents Professor Emeritus in the Department of Geology & Geophysics

“A tsunami is a sea wave caused by an earthquake, submarine landslide, or other disturbance. Tsunamis are among the most destructive natural occurrences on the planet. It is widely believed that a global tsunami caused by a meteorite impact killed the dinosaurs, and a tsunami caused by the eruption of Thera likely destroyed the Minoan civilization on Crete (c. 1600 BCE). Most tsunamis are caused by earthquakes. On boxing day in 2004 a tsunami devastated the south shore of Sumatra, killing some 230,000. In 2011, the Tohoku-Oki mega-quake and tsunami in Japan killed more than 16,000, and did an estimated \$360 billion in damage. For many years the risk of a large earthquake and tsunami in Cascadia was thought to be low; no such event has occurred there since the arrival of European explorers. But in recent years evidence of a long history of great earthquakes has accumulated. The last occurred in 1700. The next could happen tomorrow.”

DECEMBER 2018

Chancellor's Annual Holiday Luncheon

Featuring remarks by Dr. Eli Jones, Dean of the Mays Business School

"We are pleased to announce our final event for the Fall semester. On December 13th beginning at 10:30am, Chancellor & Mrs. Sharp have once again offered to host a holiday luncheon. The presentation this year will feature remarks by Dr. Eli Jones, Dean of the Mays Business School. Professor Jones will discuss business education today and the 50th Anniversary of Mays Business School.

This year Chancellor Sharp has invited us to hold the luncheon at the newly opened Doug Pitcock '49 Texas A&M Hotel and Conference Center on Joe Routh Blvd. The room will be open for coffee and conversation at 10 am and the program will begin at 10:30 am."



FEBRUARY 2019

"The Afterlife of Jane Austen"

Presented by Mary Ann O'Farrell, Associate Professor of English

"Despite her death in 1817, Jane Austen continues to make appearances in recent and contemporary popular culture. As a woman writer long loved (and also long hated) for her contributions to our understanding of marriage, manners, style, and even the erotic, she appears frequently on commodities (t-shirts and coffee mugs, tote bags and bumper stickers), in sequels and fan fiction, and in film, television, and online adaptations. She has even been known to crop up in media discussions of world and national politics. Using specific examples of Austen's presence in our culture as an image or a reference, "The Afterlife of Jane Austen" invites us to examine some of these ghostly manifestations of Austen as a way to think about how and why we choose to reimagine her as we do, what we are thinking about when we invoke her image. Considering this author's cultural afterlife means thinking not only about Jane Austen but about us."





APRIL 2019

“Watching Gold Form: Gravitational Waves And Binary Neutron Star Mergers”

Presented by Jennifer Marshall, Assistant Professor in the Department of Physics and Astronomy

“Recent years have seen several key scientific developments that have greatly advanced our understanding of stellar nucleosynthetic processes, the physics that describes the formation of the chemical elements in the Universe. From the recent direct observation of a binary neutron star merger event enabled by the detection of gravitational waves that alerted astronomers to the event, to the discovery of dozens of satellite galaxies in orbit around our Milky Way galaxy, many of which contain chemically peculiar assemblies of stars, these discoveries have shed new light on the formation sites of the heaviest elements such as gold, silver, platinum, and uranium. For decades humans have sought to understand the formation mechanisms of every element on the Periodic Table; today for the first time this is a realizable goal. In this talk I will describe these recent advances and look to the future of this field.”



MAY 2019

“Edith’s War: The Life and Times of a WW II Red Cross Worker & a Lifelong Champion of Social Justice”

Presented by Peter Witt, Professor Emeritus in the Department of Recreation, Park & Tourism Sciences

“Besides Rosie the Riveter, many women played an important role in winning World War II. One woman, Edith May Witt, served her country for three years by joining the Red Cross as a staff assistant (or “club woman”), first in Oran, Algeria, and then in Italy. Edith was also a talented writer and left behind a rich archive that illuminates the wartime experiences of civilian women. In her words:

“We worked long hard hours with sometimes a day off a week. I was always tired, high on excitement, adventure, joy and sorrow, amid thousands of people, mostly men. I got to know more about my country and about Americans than I had ever known before and I loved them dearly.””

JUNE 2019

“Enrollment Planning at Texas A&M University: How Admissions Really Works”

Presented by Joe Pettibon, Vice President for Enrollment and Academic Services at Texas A&M University - Office of the Provost

Hosted at the George Bush Presidential Library

“As the population of Texas continues its unprecedented rise, Texas A&M University has realized tremendous enrollment growth in order to serve the state’s needs for educated workforce. Today’s enrollment management, planning and admissions processes are increasingly complex. For Texas A&M University, the desire to maintain land grant mission, measure and access each student’s merits as well as maintain a broad breadth of degree programs, while seeking to achieve preeminence in programs of signature strength are constantly challenged by evolving student interests, competition for best and brightest students, and our institutional commitments to maintain a high return on investment by students, their families and taxpayers of Texas as a whole.”



2019 - 2020 SERIES



SEPTEMBER 2019

“The Power of Proximity in Health Services Research”

Presented by Dr. Leonard L. Berry, University Distinguished Professor of Marketing, Regents Professor, and holds the M.B. Zale Chair in Retailing and Marketing Leadership in the Mays Business School

“In the 2001-2002 academic year Professor Leonard Berry, a career-long researcher in services marketing, service quality, and service organization management, studied at Mayo Clinic during a faculty development leave. It was his first time to formally study healthcare service and it proved to be a career-changing experience. Berry was fascinated by the complexity, intimacy, and high stakes of this unique service and made the decision before returning to Texas A&M to focus his research on helping improve patient experiences in healthcare. He has done just that in the 18 years since returning from Mayo Clinic. In this presentation, Berry describes his research experiences and lessons learned both at Mayo Clinic and during his most recent leave in 2014-2015 where he launched his current research program on improving service for cancer patients and their families.”



NOVEMBER 2019

“Faculty of Color in Academia and Career Success”

Presented by Christine A. Stanley '90, Vice President and Associate Provost for Diversity, and holder of the Ruth Harrington Chair in Educational Leadership in the College of Education and Human Development

“Faculty of color in predominantly White colleges and universities remain disproportionately low compared to majority White faculty members. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) report that for the academic year 2017-2018, of the 1.5 million faculty in degree-granting postsecondary institutions, 53% were full time and 47% were part time. Faculty include professors, associate professors, assistant professors, instructors, lecturers, assisting professors, adjunct professors, and interim professors. Of all full-time faculty in degree-granting postsecondary institutions for 2017-2018, 41% were White males; 35% were White females; 6% were Asian/Pacific Islander males; 5% were Asian/Pacific Islander females; 3% each were Black males, Black females, Hispanic males and Hispanic females; and those who were American Indian/Alaska Native and of two or more races each made up 1% or less of full-time faculty. While efforts continue at colleges and universities, including Texas A&M University, to diversify the faculty, those who choose and remain in academia experience many challenges including sexism, racism, xenophobia, homophobia, and Islamophobia. Using concrete examples from the research, this session will examine the experiences of faculty of color in academia including the career successes and recommendations of many who contribute to the teaching, research, and service mission of our colleges and universities.”

FEBRUARY 2020

“Growing up with Philosophy: How philosophical engagement develops friendship, community, and a sense of self”

Presented by Claire Katz, Murray & Celeste Fasken Chair in Distinguished Teaching and Professor of Philosophy

“Philosophy for/with kids?! Why is this idea simultaneously strange and compelling? We do not think it’s weird that literature, math, and science are taught to K-12 students. Why does engaging K-12 students in philosophical discussions seem unusual? In 2015, Professor Claire Katz, along with a team of colleagues, graduate students, and undergraduates launched a pre-college philosophy program— Philosophy for Children Texas—at Texas A&M. Begun in the 1960s and based on the philosophy of John Dewey and Charles Peirce, Philosophy for Children has demonstrated its significant impact on K-12 students, including increased reading and math scores and more developed critical thinking skills. However, we have found that it is the non-quantitative impact that draws young people to philosophy: developing friendships and a sense of self through a philosophical community of inquiry. P4C Texas has three foci: educators’ workshops designed to introduce K-12 educators to pre-college philosophy; pre-college philosophy undergraduate curriculum to teach the theory and practice to undergraduate students; and the Aggie School of Athens—a week-long philosophy summer camp for teens and tweens, where middle and high school students read philosophical texts and engage in philosophical discussions with peers, faculty, and Texas A&M students.”



2020 - 2021 SERIES

OCTOBER 2020

"Is the Electoral College Good for America?"

Presented by George C. Edwards III, Distinguished Professor of Political Science and Jordan Chair in Presidential Studies Emeritus

"The electoral college is a unique means of electing a chief executive, but is it a good one? Is it consistent with democracy? George Edwards analyzes the consequences of the electoral college for democracy and explains why it allows the candidate who loses the popular vote to win the election. Then he explores possible justifications for this violation of democratic principles. Does the electoral college protect interests that require protection, preserve the party system, maintain national cohesion, or provide a foundation for federalism? Edwards answers these questions and offers an alternative means of selecting the president."



NOVEMBER 2020

"The Co-Elements of an Academic/ Research Career in the Field of Bioorganometallic Chemistry"

Presented by Dr. Robin R. Murphy, Raytheon Professor of Computer Science and Engineering

"Using the iconic Periodic Table as an organizational tool, this lecture will highlight Components that shaped Marcetta's research career as a new field of chemistry developed: Colleagues, Co-workers, Community, Collaborators, Competitors, Companions, etc."



2021 - 2022 SERIES



DECEMBER 2021

Chancellor's Annual Holiday Luncheon

Featuring remarks from Dr. Susan Balabina, Vice President of Academic and Strategic Collaborations

"I am pleased to announce that our renewed face-to-face programming will kick off on Thursday, December 9th, with our 7th annual program luncheon hosted by Chancellor John Sharp—in the ballroom of the Doug Pitcock '49 Texas A&M Hotel and Conference Center. The event will open at 10 am with coffee and conversation, with program start at 10:30 am and lunch served at 11:45 am.

We have an outstanding program lined up this year, including comments from Dr. Susan Balabina, Vice President of Academic and Strategic Collaborations, a new division at Texas A&M that includes oversight of the CFR. She will provide an overview for her division's efforts to impact University efforts in communities, economic development, undergraduate recruitment, international partnerships, and campus arts and culture initiatives."



MARCH 2022

Bus Tour of RELLIS Campus

Presented by Major General Tim Green, Strategic Advisor for National Security Initiatives

"We will be hosting a Bus Tour of RELLIS campus this month. The tour will depart at 10:00 am from the TAMU Hotel on an Aggie Spirit Bus. Kelly Templin, the Director of the RELLIS campus, or Associate Director Brad Hall will conduct the tour, which will stop for lunch at the Center for Infrastructure Renewal. Major General Tim Green, Strategic Advisor for National Security Initiatives, will make a presentation and a light lunch will be served. Transportation will be available to take folks back to the hotel whenever they are ready to do so."



MARCH 2022

“Robots to the Rescue: They Really Are Coming for You!”

Presented by Dr. Robin R. Murphy, Raytheon Professor of Computer Science and Engineering

“This talk will describe how ground, aerial, and marine robots have been used by my group in over 30 disasters, from the 9/11 World Trade Center to the Surfside condominium collapses. The talk will also include the surprising use of robots for the coronavirus pandemic. From Jan 23, 2020, to Jan 24, 2022, 420 instances of robots in 50 countries protecting healthcare workers from unnecessary exposure, handling the surge in demand for clinical care, preventing infections, restoring economic activity, and maintaining individual quality of life have been reported. Under National Science Foundation funding, our analysis has created a model of technology adoption during disasters and has identified troubling legal and ethical issues in disaster robotics.”

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